

## ABSTRACT

CORNELL, RENA. Power, Control, and the Gender Gap in Delinquency: Reconsidering the Gendered Translation of Power from Workplace to Household. (Under the direction of Stacy De Coster.)

Power-control theory provides one of most comprehensive theoretical explorations of the gender gap in delinquency to date. The theory posits that the relative power of husbands and wives in the workplace translates directly into their relative power within the home. Household power relations, in turn, are played out in the relative control of sons and daughters, influencing ultimately the gender gap in delinquency through social psychological processes of familial control and socialization toward risk. This paper reformulates power-control theory in two important ways. First, it borrows from the family and gender literature on status-reversal and single mother households to critique the simplistic discussion of the translation of gendered power relations from workplaces to households. In doing so, the paper specifies an alternative discussion of power relations and family structures. Second, the paper draws upon criminological research and theorizing on gender and delinquency to posit a more thorough discussion of the social psychological mechanisms linking gendered power differentials to the gender gap in delinquency. Thus, the paper presents a reformulation of power-control theory that reconsiders both structural-level power differentials between mothers and fathers and individual-level processes of control and socialization of sons and daughters. From this reformulation, I derive and test hypotheses using a nationally representative sample of youths. The results suggest that further consideration of how power translates from workplaces to households is necessary and also provide some support for recent theorizing about gender differences in the social psychological mechanisms leading to the gender gap in delinquency.

**Power, Control, and the Gender Gap in Delinquency: Reconsidering the Gendered Translation of Power from Workplace to Household**

By

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

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## *Introduction*

One of the most consistent findings in criminology is that males are much more likely than females to engage in crime and delinquency (Hindelang 1979; Steffensmeier and Allan 1995). Hagan and his colleagues (1985, 1987, 1990) proposed a power-control theory explanation for this gender gap. Their theory represents one of the first attempts to explain the gender gap in delinquency by theorizing explicitly about gender. Power-control theory (Hagan et al. 1987, 1990) posits that the gender gap in delinquency can be attributed to a process of gender reproduction that varies with parental power relations, said to be rooted in workplace power dynamics. Specifically, the theory proposes that the relative power of mothers and fathers in the workplace determines their relative power in the home, ultimately affecting the relative amount of control to which they subject their sons and daughters, as well as gender differences in socialization toward risk-taking. Gender differences in these social psychological processes of control and socialization toward risk, in turn, influence the gender gap in delinquency. In short, power-control theory is both a theory of the gender gap in delinquency and a theory of the reproduction of gender relations from workplaces to households, and from one generation to the next.

One of the chief strengths of power-control theory is its attempt to connect processes within the workplace to those within the household and, ultimately, to the gender gap in delinquency. Theories of social structure and personality have long noted that the workplace experiences of parents may affect child socialization practices (see Kohn 1959, 1969, 1976). Drawing on this literature, criminologists have demonstrated connections between parental workplace experiences, parenting behaviors, and adolescent delinquency (Heimer 1997; Messner and Krohn 1990). These theories, however, have failed to discuss the ways in

which parental work experiences influence particularly *gender differences* in delinquency. Hagan and his colleagues can be credited with creating these important links.

In the present research, I draw on this major strength of power-control theory. However, I propose considerable reformulations of both the structural and social psychological discussions of power-control theory's account of how gender power differentials are translated from work to home and, ultimately, to the gender gap in delinquency.

The paper proceeds as follows: I begin with a general discussion of power-control theory. In the next section, I use research and theorizing from the sociological literature on families to critique and reformulate Hagan et al.'s (1987, 1990) discussion of the translation of gender power differentials from the workplace to the household. Next, I offer an extension of the social psychological processes posited by power-control theory to mediate the effects of parental power differentials on the gender gap in delinquency. From these discussions, I introduce a new theoretical framework for understanding the gender gap in delinquency. I derive and test hypotheses from this framework using the National Survey of Children. In the final sections, I discuss the results from this test and provide directions for future research.

### *Power-Control Theory*

One of the strengths of power-control theory is that it provides connections between gender inequity on the structural-level and social-psychological dynamics within families on the individual-level. This theory was introduced at a time when sociologists became keenly aware of the need for multi-level theories, or theories that bridge levels of analysis. Accordingly, the theory is regarded highly among criminologists and sociologists. In the

following sections, I discuss several difficulties in the general processes through which the theory posits that structural-level and individual-level processes operate to influence the gender gap in delinquency.

#### *Structural-level processes*

At the structural-level, power-control theory posits links between the relative power of husbands and wives in the workplace and their relative power in the household. Within this framework, gendered power dynamics in the workforce translate directly into power relations between husbands and wives in the household. Thus, the gender relations that are reproduced in the household vary according to the relative workplace positions of husbands and wives (Hagan et al. 1987, 1990).

Hagan and his colleagues (1987, 1990) draw upon neo-Marxian discussions of power in the workplace to argue that workplace power is determined by an individual's authority and/or control in the workplace. Consistent with Wright and Perrone's (1977) work on workplace positions, the theory proposes that workplace power and control are best conceptualized by considering whether individuals are employers (i.e. owners), managers, workers, or part of the unemployed surplus population. Within this framework, owners are considered to be the most powerful group. Managers have some power because although they do not own the means of production, they do have control over the work of others. The workers do not control others in the workplace and, therefore, are quite powerless. However, the unemployed or surplus population is the least powerful in this framework.

Power-control theory posits that husbands and wives can be placed into these categories and compared in terms of their relative power. According to the theory, there are two broad family types: balanced families and unbalanced families. Balanced families are

those in which parents have the same amount of workplace power and authority relative to one another. For example, couples in which both spouses are managers are considered to be balanced. Alternatively, unbalanced households are those in which spouses are employed in positions with unequal power. These households include both those in which the husband has more power than the wife and those in which the wife has more power than the husband (Hagan et al. 1987).

The theory goes on to propose three general family types, determined by the balance of spouses' workplace power relations. All balanced families are considered to fit into the egalitarian family type (Hagan et al. 1987, 1990). Unbalanced families are considered to fit into the patriarchal family type of the theory if the husband has greater workplace power relative to his wife. The third family type is the matriarchal family wherein the wife has greater workplace power than her husband. Although matriarchal families are included in power-control theory's general discussion of family types, Hagan et al. (1987, 1990) did not theorize about them due to their empirical rarity. This is the basis of one of my critiques of the theory's structural-level discussion.

Power-control theory considers female-headed households—i.e. households in which mothers raise their children without a father present—as egalitarian households because the women in these households are not controlled by a husband. Drawing on arguments of feminist criminologists, this is the basis of a second critique I offer of power-control theory's discussion of family types. Specifically, feminist criminologists posit that women who head households often are subject to the patriarchal control of the state (see Simpson 1991).

Hagan and his colleagues' (1987, 1990) discussion of relative workplace power and family types proposes a direct translation of power in the workplace to power in the

household. For instance, in egalitarian households, husbands and wives have equal power in the workplace and in the home. In patriarchal households, husbands have more power than their wives in both the workplace and in the home. The matriarchal household is not discussed explicitly, but one might surmise that power-control theory would consider women who have more power than their husbands in the workplace to also have more power in the home.

Although these general links between relative workplace power and relative household power are at the heart of power-control theory, the propositions have not been assessed directly in tests of the theory (e.g. Grasmick et al. 1996; Hagan 1987, 1990; McCarthy et al. 1999; Singer and Levine 1988). Instead, tests of the theory have assessed simply the effect of workplace power differentials on the relative control of sons and daughters, assuming that if there is a link between these processes, then it supports the theory's discussion of household power.

#### *Social psychological processes*

The structural-level discussion of the relative workplace and household power of husbands and wives is relevant to the gender gap in delinquency because it influences the relative control of sons and daughters, as well as gender differences in socialization toward risk. Specifically, power-control theory posits that the socialization and control of sons and daughters varies across family types, influencing ultimately the gender gap in delinquency across family types (Hagan et al. 1987, 1990).

The social psychological factors in power-control theory include instrumental and expressive familial controls, as well as socialization toward risk. The theory posits that gender power relations between parents are reproduced in their children through the

differential control and socialization of sons and daughters. In patriarchal households, for instance, daughters are more controlled than sons and sons, but not daughters, are socialized to prefer risk. The controls to which daughters are more subject include both instrumental controls, such as supervision, and expressive controls, such as the development of emotional bonds. Drawing on control theories of delinquency more generally, the theory proposes that youths who are emotionally attached to their parents will be less likely to engage in delinquency because they do not want to risk the loss of those close relationships (see Hirschi 1969). Because daughters are more controlled than sons in patriarchal households where husbands have more power than wives, the gender gap in delinquency is posited to be large in these households.

The theory also proposes that socialization toward risk contributes to this large gender gap. Specifically, sons in patriarchal households are encouraged to develop a taste for risk-taking, a particularly masculine taste that serves as a resource in the world of productive work. Daughters, however, are not encouraged to prefer risk because it is the antithesis of the “cult of domesticity,” which does not require risk-taking (Hagan 1987: 793).

In egalitarian families, in which mothers and fathers have equal power or in which there is no father present, sons and daughters are controlled more equally and are both encouraged to develop a preference for risk-taking. As such, the gender gap in delinquency is posited to be reduced considerably in these households.

Although Hagan et al. (1987, 1990) did not discuss matriarchal households explicitly, the logical extension of their theory is that daughters may be subject to less control than sons and that daughters may be socialized to prefer risk-taking to a greater extent than sons. However, Hagan et al. (1987) appropriately note that this is unlikely to be the case in this

situation because there is not broader cultural support in our society for the reproduction of these gender relations. However, the theory failed to explore potential asymmetry between matriarchal and patriarchal households in the transfer of workplace power to household control processes.

Overall, power-control theory proposes two general family types. There are egalitarian families in which husbands and wives have equal power in the workplace and in the home. These power relations are transferred to their children through the relative control and socialization of sons and daughters. Specifically, sons and daughters in these households are treated similarly in terms of how much freedom they are granted and in general socialization practices. The gender gap in delinquency in these families is posited to be small because of the equal treatment of sons and daughters. Patriarchal households are those in which husbands have more power than wives in the workplace and in the home. In these households, power relations are transferred through the differential treatment of sons and daughters. That is, sons are granted more freedom than are daughters, and sons are socialized to prefer risk while daughters are not. The gender gap in delinquency is posited to be large in these families because of the differential treatment of sons and daughters.

### *Critique and Reformulation*

While power-control theory's general framework is compelling and has endured in the literature on gender and delinquency (e.g. Grasmick et al. 1996; Leiber and Wacker 1997; McCarthy et al. 1999), the specifics of the theory have been subject to much criticism, due in part to the theory's lack of empirical support. In general, although tests of power-control theory find modest support for the social psychological components of the theory, most empirical assessments fail to find support for the theory structural propositions (e.g. Jensen

and Thompson 1990; Singer and Levine 1988). For instance, Singer and Levine (1988) find that gender differences in control and risk-taking are greater in balanced than in unbalanced families, suggesting that the structural level processes and the social psychological level processes proposed in power-control theory are not linked together as the theory proposes. Morash and Chesney-Lind (1991) also fail to find support for the theory's structural level propositions. Specifically, they fail to find an influence of family type on the association between gender and delinquency.

In this paper, I focus on general criticisms of the theory at both the structural- and social-psychological levels. The structural-level criticisms of the theory center upon the proposition of the theory that power in the workplace translates directly to power in the household, and upon the assumption that single mothers are not subject to patriarchal control. At the social-psychological level, I focus on criticisms that the theory is narrow in attending solely to family processes for understanding the gender gap in delinquency.

#### *Critique and Reformulation of the Structural-level Process*

*Power Transfers:* Power-control theory (Hagan et al. 1987, 1990) assumes the existence of two processes that contribute to gender gap, or gender differences, in delinquency. In the first process, the power of mothers and fathers in the labor force translates directly into their relative power in the home. In the second process, power dynamics between couples in the home are translated into the relative control of sons and daughters, affecting ultimately the gender gap in delinquency.

The assumptions upon which these processes rest have been the subject of much criticism, resulting in several, often disjointed partial reformulations of the theory (see Grasmick et al. 1996; Singer and Levine 1988). One such area of criticism is in regard to the

theory's assumptions about household power (Morash and Chesney-Lind 1991). According to the logic of power-control theory, the translation of power from workplace to home is not shaped explicitly by gender structures in society. If a man has more workplace power than his spouse, he will have more household power, and vice versa. However, the gender-neutral translation of power is assumed rather than tested. Compounding the problem, matriarchal families have gone unanalyzed in tests of power-control theory due to sample size limitations (Hagan et al. 1987; McCarthy et al. 1991).

A vast body of gender and family literature makes apparent the salience of gender in the translation of workplace power to household power. Power-control theory, relying upon economic determinist notions, fails to incorporate what sociologists have learned about how power translations from the workplace to the home differ for females and males (see Atkinson and Boles 1984; Bittman et al. 2003; Brines 1994; Gazso-Windle and McMullin 2003; Greenstein 2000; Tichenor 1999). Findings in the family and gender literature suggest that the structural component of power-control theory is in need of alteration.

This research focuses on the implications of relative spousal workplace power for relative power in the home (Blumstein and Schwartz 1983; Kulik 1999; Tichenor 1999). Household power in these studies typically is conceptualized as relative contribution to household labor (see Coltrane 2000 for a review; Tichenor 1999), decision-making (Blumstein and Schwartz 1983; Kulik 1999; Tichenor 1999), and/or control over money (Blumstein and Schwartz 1983; Tichenor 1999).

Workplace power has been tapped variably with measures of income (see Coltrane 2000 for a review) and/or with measures of occupational status (Tichenor 1999). Occupational status refers to the socially determined prestige of an occupation, whereas

Hagan et al.'s (1987, 1990) neo-Marxian occupational categories rely upon measures of control over the means of production and control over the work of others. As I discuss this literature, it is important to keep in mind that power in the workplace is measured differently in the family studies than what Hagan et al. (1987, 1990) posit in their neo-Marxian discussion of class. However, the findings from this literature can surely inform discussions of power transfers. Unfortunately, there is not direct evidence available on how power, as measured with neo-Marxian class categories, transfers from the workplace to the home. This, in part, is because family sociologists have not conceptualized power in this way typically. It also is in part due to the fact that tests of power-control theory have not assessed this link directly. Thus, I draw upon the best available evidence for my critique that power-control theory has failed to consider the gendering of power transfers from workplace to household.

Empirical evidence on the relationship between workplace power and household power for husbands and wives is contrary to the assumption in power-control theory that workplace power translates directly to household power. In a qualitative study, Tichenor (1999) examines the household power dynamics of traditional and "status-reversal" couples. She conceptualizes traditional couples as those in which the husband earns more income or has greater occupational prestige than his wife. These would be patriarchal households in power-control theory. Status-reversal couples are those in which the wife has greater income or occupational prestige than her husband, consistent with descriptions of matriarchal households. Tichenor (1999: 638) reports that marital power seems to be determined more by gender than by workplace status (i.e. occupation type) or income. Specifically, she finds that for men, power at work translates to power in the household, as measured by decision

making power, control over money, and relief from household labor. For women, however, power at work does not translate into power in the household.

To explain this, Tichenor (1999) posits that we must consider the gendered meaning of work and provision. Specifically, she contends that the meaning of providing for the family is different for males and females. For females, provision traditionally is tied to emotion work and providing affection to husbands and children. For males, economic provision is traditionally key. When women contribute more than men in terms of economics, Tichenor (1999) argues that couples downplay the importance of the female's job and her role as financial provider to offset discomfort associated with the fact that they do not fit gender typical scripts and/or are engaging in status-reversal. In short, this study suggests that men and women compensate when their positions of power in the workplace do not match cultural scripts. When females have more power in the workplace than their spouses, compensatory processes make it such that this power does not translate directly into the home.

Quantitative studies also report asymmetry in power transfers. For instance, females who earn less than their husbands perform a greater proportion of household labor, and the disparity is most pronounced among couples in which the male is employed fulltime and the female is not employed (see Coltrane 2000 for a review). In other words, husbands' power in the workplace buys them out of household labor. When treating relative income as a proxy for relative workplace power and household labor as a measure of household power, this finding is consistent with Hagan et al.'s (1987, 1990) proposal that power in the workplace translates directly to power in the household. Moreover, research demonstrates that the relative performance of household labor among spouses becomes increasingly similar as the

income of wives approaches that of their husbands (Bittman et al. 2003; Brines 1994; Greenstein 2000). This also is consistent with the logic of power-control theory.

Furthermore, the most egalitarian (although not entirely equal) divisions of household labor are found among couples in which partners have the same income (Bittman et al. 2003; Brines 1994; Greenstein 2000; also see Coltrane 2000 for a review).

Quantitative findings on couples in which females earn more than males indicate the existence of a more complex process than that which is assumed in power-control theory. Contrary to power-control theory's proposition, studies of household power find that higher-earning females perform a greater relative proportion of household labor than their lesser-earning husbands. In fact, the greater the female's relative income, the greater her relative proportion of household labor (Bittman et al. 2003; Brines 1994; Greenstein 2000). This suggests that these couples compensate in the household for their non-traditional workplace power relations.

In sum, qualitative (Tichenor 1999) and quantitative (Bittman et al. 2003; Brines 1994; Greenstein 2000) studies do not support Hagan et al.'s (1987) discussion of matriarchal families. Rather, it appears that status-reversal couples more closely approximate a patriarchal family type (in terms of household power) than an egalitarian or matriarchal type.

Family researchers draw upon gender literature to explain these general findings. Tichenor (1999) borrows Komter's (1989) notion of hidden power, as well as West and Zimmerman's (1987) concept of doing gender to posit that status-reversal couples, exemplified by matriarchal households in power-control theory, perform traditional gender behaviors in the home to offset the discomfort and dissatisfaction with their status and income dynamics. Similarly, Greenstein (2000) argues that men and women engage in

gender displays in the home when they fulfill non-traditional roles in the labor force. That is, men and women compensate in the household by engaging in gender traditional behaviors when their relational power in the workplace is gender atypical. Because they are doing gender deviance in the workplace, higher-earning females and lower-earning males engage in deviance neutralization in the home by doing traditional masculinity and femininity (Greenstein 2000).

Bittman et al. (2003: 186) also assert that “gender trumps money” when the female out-earns the male, claiming that “couples that deviate from the normative income standard... seem to compensate with a more traditional division of household work.” Because they cannot do traditional gender in relative workplace dynamics, higher-earning females and lower-earning males compensate by doing traditional gender in the home.

These arguments and findings in the family literature also can be understood in a more social-psychological manner. For instance, Stets’ (1995) work in social psychology finds that individuals who lack autonomy at work may compensate by attempting to gain control in the household setting. The family research discussed thus far suggests that males more so than females may engage in such compensation, though this not entirely consistent with Stets’ findings. Arrighi and Maume’s (2000) study underscores the gendering of compensation, however. They find that when men experience challenges to masculinity at work, they react by refusing to do traditionally female household tasks (which constitute the majority of daily household labor). By contrast, women who experience subordination in the workplace do not experience challenges to femininity and, therefore, do not engage in any form of resistance in the home. Thus, it may be expected that household power dynamics are not the same for powerful and powerless balanced families.

In sum, family researchers find that the translation of workplace power (or relative income) into household power is not direct, symmetrical, and/or gender-neutral, particularly in instances where females have more workplace power than their mates. Rather, paid work and household behaviors have different meanings for females and males. Thus, a partial reconceptualization of the first assumption of power-control theory is in order.

*Single Mothers:* Criticisms of power-control theory also focus on the treatment of female-headed households (Leiber and Wacker 1997; Morash and Chesney-Lind 1991). Hagan et al. (1987: 793) contend that “because fathers are not an integral part of female-headed households, there should be no manifest power imbalance between parents.” Thus, single-mother families are treated as no different from dual-parent families in which there is an equal distribution of household power. Morash and Chesney-Lind (1991) claim that this conceptualization is too simplistic and fails to recognize the importance of single mothers’ workplace power. They claim that the class position of single mothers should determine family type, positing that powerless single mothers are qualitatively different from single mothers who have workplace power. Morash and Chesney-Lind (1991), like Hagan et al. (1987, 1990), consider single mothers who have workplace power to have “balanced” households. Unlike Hagan and colleagues, however, they consider single mothers who lack power in the workplace to have “unbalanced” households. This treatment of single mother households is consistent with Simpson’s (1991) argument that powerless single mothers who become dependent upon the (patriarchal) state differ qualitatively from single mothers who are independent. Therefore, households of single mothers who have workplace power should be considered less patriarchal than households of single mothers who lack workplace power.

*Reformulating Family Types*

Based on the discussion thus far, I reformulate the family types of power-control theory. Consistent with Hagan et al. (1987, 1990), I consider traditional families in which the male has workplace power and the female lacks workplace power to be patriarchal. In these situations, the transference of power is not problematic because the power relations of husbands and wives are those that fit traditional gender practices and expectations. As such, power relations transfer directly to households, wherein husbands and wives are argued in traditional conceptualizations to have complementary, traditionally gendered schemas. The unequal relative distribution of labor force power carries over to the household allocation of power.

-----Table 1 about here-----

Unlike Hagan et al. (1987, 1990), I conceptualize status-reversal families, wherein wives have more power in the workplace than do husbands, as patriarchal families, rather than matriarchal. In these families, neither partner is doing traditional gender in their relative paid labor force position. Therefore, both may compensate within the home. For females, this means doing femininity/powerlessness and for males, this means doing masculinity/powerfulness in the household. Furthermore, the male's lack of workplace autonomy and emasculation at work may result in his compensating in the home by attempting to control his partner (Arrighi and Maume 2000). It certainly may be the case that compensatory behaviors used to combat feelings of workplace emasculation may be more extreme than those that are simple transfers of power from workplace to home (see Table 1). Thus, spouses who do status reversal in the workplace may construct the most patriarchal households.

In my reformulation, I conceptualize powerful balanced families differently than powerless balanced families. This differs from the discussion of power-control theory above. Powerful balanced families are those in which both partners have workplace power (i.e. employers and managers). Powerless balanced families are those in which neither partner has workplace power (i.e. workers and the unemployed).

I treat powerful balanced families as (nearly) egalitarian. In these families, the male is able to do traditional gender in the labor force and, therefore, should not experience a need to compensate by engaging in compensatory gender practices within the home. However, because he has no more power relative to his female partner, he may compensate in minor ways. Alternatively, the female does not do traditional gender within the labor force and therefore may engage in some compensation within the home. Because she does not have more labor force power relative to her male partner, however, her compensation may not be as extreme as found among couples in which the female has more labor force power than her partner. Furthermore, neither partner lacks workplace autonomy, so there is no need to exert control over one's partner. In other words, both partners may compensate only minimally (see Table 1).

I conceptualize powerless balanced families as more patriarchal than powerful balanced families, but not as patriarchal as traditional and status-reversal families. In these families, the male is unable to do traditional gender because his workplace position is equivalent to that of his female partner and he is, therefore, expected to compensate by doing masculinity/powerfulness in the home. However, his compensation is not expected to be as extreme as that of a male who is out-earned by, or has less occupational status than, his female partner. Like the lower-earning/status male, his lack of workplace autonomy suggests

that he may be compensating in the home by attempting to control his partner. Alternatively, the female does not experience any need to do traditional gender in the home because she is not experiencing any dissonance in her relative workplace position. Therefore, this household is conceptualized as somewhat patriarchal. The establishment of a somewhat patriarchal family type responds to Uggen's (2000) recent criticism that Hagan et al.'s (1987, 1990) traditional-patriarchal and egalitarian forms do not account for all family types.

I also incorporate Morash and Chesney-Lind's (1991) call for different conceptualizations of powerless and powerful single-mother families. Specifically, I conceptualize powerless single-mother families as somewhat patriarchal and powerful single-mother families as (nearly) egalitarian.

#### *Critique and Reformulation of the Social-Psychological Process*

Criticisms of power-control theory also focus on the social psychological components of the theory. Specifically, the theory has been criticized for focusing narrowly on familial social-psychological processes, despite empirical research demonstrating that one of the strongest predictors of delinquency, as well as the gender gap in delinquency, is exposure to delinquent peers (Warr 2000; Giordano and Rockwell 2001; Heimer and DeCoster 1999; Morash 1986). Singler and Levine (1988) have argued most explicitly for the inclusion of delinquent peers in power-control theory.

Delinquent peers can readily be incorporated into power-control theory because most research suggests that one reason males are exposed to more delinquent contacts than females is that they are less controlled than females (Heimer and DeCoster 1999; Sutherland 1947). This research considers the same types of control as does power-control theory. Thus, it can be argued that in families where daughters are more controlled than sons, they

will have fewer delinquent peers than will sons. Alternatively, in families where sons and daughters are controlled similarly, they should have similar contacts with delinquent peers.

*Summary and Reformulation of the Theory*

Hagan and his colleagues (1987, 1990) propose that the gender gap in delinquency is attributable to a process of gender reproduction that varies with parental power relations, said to be rooted in workplace power dynamics. They contend that, dependent upon family type, sons and daughters are differentially controlled and differentially socialized to prefer risky behaviors. These processes of control and socialization enable parents to recreate among their children the gender relations they experience in the workplace and in the home. Thus, according to Hagan et al. (1987, 1990), the gender gap in delinquency varies among family types, and is attributable to differences in the control and socialization of sons and daughters.

Drawing on the family and gender literature discussed here, I offer a reformulation of power-control theory. The changes I make affect primarily the structural aspect of the theory, in which family types are determined. The only alteration made to the latter, social-psychological aspect of the theory is the addition of delinquent peers. The social-psychological factors proposed in power-control theory to affect the gender gap in delinquency among different family types are left unchanged.

-----Table 2 about here-----

The relationships I discuss in this section are depicted in chart form in Table 2. Using the new conceptualization of family types, I test the hypothesis that the gender gap in delinquency varies across family types, with the gap being largest in patriarchal family types and smallest in (nearly) egalitarian family types (Tables 2, row 6, columns 1,2, and 4). Thus, I hypothesize that the gender gap in delinquency is greatest among patriarchal/traditional and

patriarchal/status-reversal families and smallest among the egalitarian households in which both parents are powerful and in which single mothers have power in the workplace. The gender gap in delinquency in somewhat patriarchal/paternal-compensation households, comprised of families in which both parents are powerless at work but fathers compensate at home and powerless single-mother families, is smaller than in the first two family types but larger than the gender gap in the egalitarian households (Table 2, column 4, row 6).

Consistent with the logic of power-control theory (Hagan et al. 1987, 1990), I hypothesize that parents reproduce gendered workplace power dynamics in the relative control and differential socialization of sons and daughters. In patriarchal households, daughters are not socialized to take risks and are subject to greater instrumental and expressive controls than are sons. Consequently, these daughters have fewer delinquent associations than do their male counterparts (Table 2, column 1, rows 3, 4, and 5). These gender differences ultimately result in the lesser likelihood of daughters in these families to engage in delinquency than sons. In other words, gender differences in parental controls, risk-taking preferences, and delinquent peers should mediate the effect of gender on delinquency in both patriarchal family types.

In egalitarian households, sons and daughters are similarly socialized to prefer risky behaviors, are subject to equivalent instrumental and expressive parental control, and, thus, are similarly exposed to delinquent peers. The result of these processes is a smaller gender gap in delinquency among youths from egalitarian households than among those from patriarchal households.

I expect the gender gap in delinquency among adolescents from somewhat patriarchal/paternal-compensation households to fall somewhere between these other

households. In these families, I propose that daughters are controlled slightly more than sons and are slightly less socialized for risk taking. Consequently, daughters in these households have slightly fewer delinquent associations than sons. Thus, the gender gap in delinquency among these households is expected to exist, but to be smaller than found among patriarchal households (see Table 2).

Hypothesis 1: The effect of gender on delinquency varies across family types.

Hypothesis 1a: The effect of gender on delinquency is relatively large in both patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families.

Hypothesis 1b: The effect of gender on delinquency is greater in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families than in somewhat patriarchal/paternal-compensation families.

Hypothesis 1c: The effect of gender on delinquency is greater in somewhat patriarchal/paternal-compensation families than in egalitarian families.

One of the mechanisms through which these differential gender gaps are produced within these family types includes parental controls. Specifically, the relative control of sons and daughters across these family types is hypothesized to vary. Control refers to both instrumental and expressive controls. Instrumental control includes supervision of sons and daughters; expressive control is related to the development of emotional attachments to youth.

The differential control of sons and daughters should mediate the effect of gender on delinquency in each of the family types, though the size of the gender gap in delinquency and differences in exposure to control for sons and daughter varies across families.

Hypothesis 2: The effect of gender on delinquency is mediated partially by familial control, especially in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families where sons and daughters are controlled most differently (Table 2, row 3).

Hypothesis 2a: The effect of gender on delinquency is mediated partially by family attachment, especially in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families.

Hypothesis 2b: The effect of gender on delinquency is mediated partially by supervision, especially in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families.

Gender differences in preference for risky behaviors are hypothesized also to play a part in mediating the effect of gender on delinquency. According to power-control theory, sons, who are prepared for successful entrepreneurship, are socialized to prefer risk. Alternatively, daughters, who are prepared for passive domesticity, are not. This is particularly true in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal households. Therefore, I hypothesize that risk preference will partially explain the gender gap in delinquency, especially in these two types of households (Table 2, row 4).

Hypothesis 3: The effect of gender on delinquency is mediated partially by preference for risk, especially in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families.

Although power-control theory posited mediating effects of only family attachment, parental supervision, and risk preference, I include delinquent peers in the analysis. The literature indicates that, due to weaker controls placed on sons, male adolescents are more likely to have delinquent peers than are females (Heimer and DeCoster 1999; Morash 1986). Thus, I hypothesize that delinquent peers also will account partially for the gender gap in

delinquency. This is particularly true in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families, where sons and daughters are controlled most differently and, thereby, are more different than other sons and daughters in their exposure to delinquent peers (Table 2, row 5).

Hypothesis 4: The effect of gender on delinquency is further mediated by delinquent peers, especially in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families.

#### *Data and Measurement*

I test these hypotheses using the National Survey of Children (NSC). The NSC is a longitudinal study based on a nationally representative sample of youth (Zill, Furstenberg, Peterson, and Moore 1976; 1981; 1987). The data in this research are from the second and third waves of the NSC. In the first wave of data collection in 1976, 2,301 interviews were completed with youths, ages 7 to 11, and their parents. The original sample was a multi-stage stratified probability sample of U.S. households containing at least one child. If the household contained two eligible children, both were interviewed. If the household contained three or more eligible children, two were randomly selected. The first wave had a completion rate of 80 percent. Black households were over-sampled and weights were created to adjust for the over-sampling.

The second wave of data was collected in 1983, when participants were 14 to 18 years of age. One-thousand four-hundred and twenty-three (1,423) youths completed the second wave interview. The third wave of data was collected in 1987, when participants were 17 to 21 years of age. One-thousand one-hundred and forty-seven (1,147) of the original participants completed the third wave interview. To offset the effects of purposive sampling among blacks, youth who lived in large cities, and youth who had used alcohol or smoked, the data have been weighted using race, age, gender, city size, family income, and

the number of years the family has lived in the current address in Wave 1. Of the third wave sample of 1,147 respondents, 879 are included in the analyses, due to missing data on at least one of the included variables.

#### *Dependent Variable*

The dependent variable in this study is juvenile delinquency. Delinquency is measured using youths' self-reports of their involvement in various types of delinquent behaviors in the year prior to the interview. These behaviors include the following: having carried a hidden weapon other than an ordinary pocket knife, stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle such as a car or motorcycle, stolen or tried to steal something else worth more than fifty dollars, sold marijuana or hashish, cocaine, or LSD, gotten so rowdy, unruly or loud as to bother other people, and damaged or destroyed property. These items are measured ordinally (i.e. categories of "not at all," "1-2 times," "3-11 times," "12 or more times") rather than frequency counts. Research shows that ordinal measures such as this are less skewed than are frequency counts (Elliot and Ageton 1985). Scores for each activity are summed, comprising a scale of delinquency ranging from zero (no delinquent acts) to 24 (committed every act 12 or more times in the past year). I log the variable, delinquency, to further correct for skewness. These measures of delinquency are similar to those used by Morsash and Chesney-Lind (1991) in their test of power-control theory, as well as measures used in several other delinquency studies (e.g. Agnew et al. 2002). The reliability coefficients are .588 for patriarchal/traditional families; .453 for patriarchal/status-reversal families; .591 for somewhat patriarchal/paternal compensation families; and .503 for egalitarian families.

#### *Independent Variable*

Because the research question asks if there are gender differences in delinquency across family types, the most important independent variable for the analysis is gender. Gender is tapped with the youths' reports of their gender and is a dummy variable, coded 0 for females and 1 for males. I also include two control variables as truly exogenous, independent variables in this study. These variables include the youths' age and race. Age and race have been shown in previous research to influence youths' delinquency (Gottfredson and Hirschi 1983; Matsueda and Heimer 1987). Age is tapped by the youths' reported age at the second wave and ranges from 14 to 18.

#### *Moderating Variable*

The family types serve as a moderating variable in this study. In statistical terms, youths' gender and family types are posited to interact in the prediction of delinquency. The family types are measured using mothers' and fathers' occupational titles. Following Morash and Chesney-Lind (1991) and Simpson (1991), professional/technical positions and managerial/administrative positions are coded as powerful workplace positions or "command class" positions (Hagan et al. 1987: 785). White-collar and health care service workers and blue-collar workers are coded as powerless workplace positions or "obey class" positions (Hagan et al. 1987: 785). Unemployed persons are coded as powerless, as well.

When testing my conceptualization of family types using the gender and family literature, a family is considered to be patriarchal when (1) the father is powerful and the mother is powerless ("traditional"), or (2) the father is powerless and the mother is powerful ("status-reversal"). A family is considered to be somewhat patriarchal when (1) the father and mother are powerless, or (2) the single mother is powerless. A family is considered to be nearly egalitarian when (1) the father and mother are powerful, or (2) the single mother is

powerful. I borrow from Morash and Chesney-Lind (1991) in determining treatment of powerful and powerless single mothers. Specifically, a single mother is powerful when she has a command class position and powerless when she has an obey class position or is not employed.

### *Mediating Variables*

Hypotheses 2 through 4 predict that the effect of gender on delinquency will be mediated by a set of variables, including parental control, risk-taking, and exposure to delinquent peers. Family attachment is measured by respondents' report at the second wave of data collection about how close they felt to their parents. Specifically, the measure sums the respondent's report of how close they feel to their mother, ranging from one ("not very close") to four ("extremely close"), and their response to the question, "how much do you want to be like the kind of person your mother is?," ranging from one ("not at all") to four ("a lot"). Responses are summed to create a family attachment scale. These measures are similar to those used in other tests of power-control theory (e.g. Hagan et al. 1990; McCarthy et al. 1999; Morash and Chesney-Lind 1991). The reliability coefficients are .697 for patriarchal/traditional families; .488 for patriarchal/status-reversal families; .722 for somewhat patriarchal/paternal compensation families; and .616 for egalitarian families.

Hill and Atkinson (1988) call for an examination of fathers in analyses of gender and delinquency. In the present analyses, however, measures regarding closeness to fathers are omitted for several reasons. First, high inter-correlations on responses regarding maternal and paternal closeness present statistical problems. Second, inclusion of paternal closeness measures would result in missing data for family types in which fathers are not present.

Supervision is assessed using an ordinal measure of how much it is like the adolescent's mother to know their whereabouts. The response categories include "very much like," "somewhat like," and "not at all like." This measure is similar to measures of supervision used in other studies of delinquency, including Heimer's (1997) assessment of the influence of parental workplace positions on youths' delinquency.

Preference for risk is posited also to contribute to explanations of the gender gap. Such preferences are tapped with measures of the respondents' enjoyment of risky behaviors, dares, spontaneous behaviors, and thrill seeking. Responses regarding preference for risk are summed to create a risk scale. This variable was measured at the third wave of data collection and is similar to measures of risk used in Hagan et al.'s (1987, 1990) assessment of power-control theory. The reliability coefficients are .322 for patriarchal/traditional families; .268 for patriarchal/status-reversal families; .340 for somewhat patriarchal/paternal compensation families; and .346 for egalitarian families.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the social-psychological mediating variables proposed in power-control theory, I include a measure of delinquent peers, measured at the third wave of data collection. Delinquent peer measures in the NSC include the number of respondents' friends that dropped out of school, used drugs, used alcohol, had sex, and had had police contact when the respondent was 16 years of age. Although a more broad measure of peer delinquency is desirable, such measures were unavailable. The reliability coefficients are .742 for patriarchal/traditional families; .617 for patriarchal/status-reversal families; .553 for somewhat patriarchal/paternal compensation families; and .570 for egalitarian families

### *Analysis and Results*

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<sup>1</sup> Given the poor reliabilities for this scale, I estimated each of the models using each item in the scale individually. The substantive findings are the same as those using the scale.

The analysis of the arguments presented herein proceeds in several stages. First, I present means for males and females on the dependent variable and the social-psychological variables across family types. If the general arguments are supported, t-test comparisons of the means on delinquency, parental controls, risk preferences, and delinquent peers should indicate significant gender differences for youths in patriarchal/traditional households and in patriarchal/status-reversal households. There should also be gender differences, albeit somewhat smaller, within the somewhat patriarchal/paternal-compensation households. There should be non-significant differences across gender for these variables within the egalitarian households.

The next portion of the analysis uses unstandardized OLS regression equations. I estimate the models separately for each of the four family types to assess the proposed interaction process, wherein gender has larger effects in certain family types than others and wherein this effect is mediated more effectively in these family types than in others. To assess the proposed interaction between gender and the family types, I conduct t-tests, using the method suggested by Paternoster et al. (1998). This method uses the equation:  $z = \beta_{\text{male}} - \beta_{\text{female}} / (\text{se}_{\text{male}}^2 + \text{se}_{\text{female}}^2)^{1/2}$ . These equations reveal whether gender has different effects on delinquency in the various equations, controlling for youths' age and race.<sup>2</sup> Descriptives for the data are presented in Appendix A; Appendix B present correlation matrices for each family type.

After assessing the differential effects of gender on delinquency, I assess the effect of the mediating mechanisms. I do this by first including the familial control variables—

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<sup>2</sup> Because there are no explicitly hypothesized interactions between gender and the social psychological variables, I also estimated a model with interactions between gender and family types, assessing, by stepping in the social psychological variables, whether the pattern of effect in these models mirrors those reported. These models did mirror those reported.

supervision and attachment—to determine the extent to which differential control of sons and daughters may mediate any significant gender effects across family types. The second hypothesis suggests that differential control of sons and daughters will be particularly effective in mediating the expected strong effects of youths' gender on delinquency in the patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal households.

The next model includes risk-taking to assess if this social-psychological variable further mediates the effect of gender on delinquency, above and beyond the mediating effect of parental controls. Again, risk-taking is expected to be an especially effective mediator in the two patriarchal households.

Finally, I include delinquent peers in the model to assess my social-psychological extension of power-control theory. Like the other social-psychological mechanisms in the analysis, delinquent peers are expected to have their strongest mediating effect on the relationship between gender and delinquency in the patriarchal households.

### *Results*

Table 3 presents mean comparisons across gender in the various family types. Consistent with previous research in criminology, males are more likely than their female counterparts to engage in delinquent behaviors. This is true across all the family types except patriarchal/status-reversal families, although my power-control reformulation would not have predicted this. It appears that mean differences in delinquency are quite robust. I will compare in the regression equations to determine whether this is true when controlling for race and age and I will also provide t-test comparisons to see if the strength of these differences varies across family types in the predicted directions.

Mean comparisons for the familial control variables indicate that females report that they are more controlled than males when using expressive—family attachment—measures of control. However, this is true only in the patriarchal/status-reversal and somewhat patriarchal/paternal-compensation households. It is not true for the egalitarian and patriarchal/traditional households. This pattern suggests partial support for my proposed arguments. As expected, females in egalitarian households are similar to males in terms of control through emotional bonds. Similarly, the patriarchal/status-reversal households, which were hypothesized to be households wherein females would be objects of control to a greater extent than males, witness more control of females than males. However, the pattern for the patriarchal/traditional households does not fit with my general arguments.

-----Table 3 about here-----

Turning to supervision, or more direct, instrumental familial controls, we see that the only family in which there are gender differences in exposure to supervision is the egalitarian household. Here, males report greater control than do females. This is quite interesting in that the pattern of control is reversed in regard to what one might expect. Perhaps it is the case that males in egalitarian households, where they may be controlled similarly to females, are more cognizant of direct supervisory tactics because, as males in a patriarchal society, they, more than females, feel they should not be subjected to such supervision. Another possibility is that egalitarian parents, cognizant of gender-based differential treatment of children on a societal level, may subject their sons to greater direct control to “even the playing field.” Because the analyses do not include measures of adolescent or parental agency, however, these possible effects cannot be assessed.

Preferences for risk-taking vary significantly across gender only within the somewhat patriarchal/paternal-compensation households. Consistent with the general theory, males report greater preferences for risk than do females. Inconsistent with the theory, males do not report greater risk preferences in the two most patriarchal households.

Finally, delinquent peer associations differ significantly across gender in two of the four family types. Males do not report more exposure to delinquent peers than do females in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families. This, of course, is counter to expectations. I turn now to a discussion of the OLS regression results to see if some of these inconsistencies can be understood or explained within the multivariate context.

#### *Unstandardized Metric OLS Regression Equations*

The results for the regression equations are reported in Tables 4 through 7. T-test comparisons are provided in Table 8. The first model in each of the tables provides information on whether the effect of gender on delinquency varies statistically across family types, when controlling for race and age. Consistent with the bivariate analyses just discussed, youth's gender has a significant effect on delinquency in three of the four households (Tables 4 through 7, model 1). In other words, there is a gender gap in delinquency in patriarchal/traditional, somewhat patriarchal/paternal compensation, and egalitarian households that is need of explanation. Clearly, the structural-level explanation, wherein the relative power of mothers and fathers in the workplace influences their relative power in the home and ultimately the gender gap in delinquency, is unsupported here. This is seen clearly in Table 8 where I provide the results of the z-tests, using Paternoster et al.'s (1998) equation. This table demonstrates that there is a gender gap, of equal magnitude, to be explained across each of the family types.

-----Tables 4 through 8 about here-----

The results thus far show that Hypothesis 1 is unsupported in the data. Thus, more work is required to understand how or if parental workplace positions and/or authority are important for understanding the gender gap in delinquency. It may be the case that parents' workplace positions are not relevant for understanding the gender gap in delinquency, as recent tests of power-control theory have been insinuating (e.g. Jensen and Thompson 1990). Alternatively, it could be the case that, as with other tests of power-control theory, I have not found support for my arguments because the measures of parental control in the workplace are crude at best. Hagan and his colleagues (1990) have argued that most tests of power-control theory, which have used measures akin to those used in this study, have failed to accurately tap the neo-Marxian notions of power they deem most important theoretically. Perhaps, however, it would also be relevant to reconceptualize power using the family literature and focusing on parental income or occupational status as sources of power in the workplace. These are issues to be considered for future research. In a word, it may be fruitful to consider further the arguments here, but more attention must be paid to the measurement of power in the workplace, as well as to including direct measures of power in the household.

The remainder of the paper will focus on assessing the potency of the social-psychological mechanisms—familial control, preferences for risk, and delinquent peers—in mediating the effect of gender on delinquency across the various family types. It will be interesting to note if there are significant differences in the potency of these mechanisms in mediating the effect of gender across family types, as the hypotheses suggest. To assess these hypotheses, I direct attention to Tables 4 through 7, models 2, 3, and 4.

Hypothesis 2a states that family attachment mediates the effect of gender on delinquency, particularly in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal households. Inconsistent with the hypothesis, family attachment is a significant negative predictor of delinquency in only one of the family types— egalitarian (Table 7, model 2). Furthermore, family attachment fails to mediate the effect of gender on delinquency in the one household in which it is a significant predictor of delinquency. Thus, findings regarding the mediating effect of family attachment do not support the hypotheses.

Hypothesis 2b concerns the mediating effect of parental supervision on the relationship between gender and delinquency, stating that the mediating effect will be greatest among patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families. Somewhat consistent with the hypothesis, parental supervision is a significant predictor of delinquency in patriarchal/status-reversal households, and contributes to the mediating the gender-delinquency relationship in these families (Table 5, model 2). Inconsistent with the hypothesis, the direct control measure is not a significant predictor in patriarchal/traditional households as hypothesized, nor is it a significant predictor in somewhat patriarchal/paternal compensation and egalitarian households. (Tables 4, 6, and 7, model 2).

Hypothesis 3 states that the effect of gender on delinquency is further mediated by preference for risk, especially in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families. The data fail to support the hypothesis. Risk preference is a significant predictor of delinquency in patriarchal/status-reversal, somewhat patriarchal/paternal-compensation, and egalitarian households. However, preference for risk mediates the gender-delinquency association only in somewhat patriarchal/paternal-compensation families (Table 6, model 3). In egalitarian families, the gender effect is robust even with risk preference in the analysis

(Table 7, model 3), and there is no initial gender effect in patriarchal/status-reversal households (Table 5, models 2 and 3). Contrary to predictions, risk preference has no effect in patriarchal/traditional families (Table 4, Model 3).

Hypothesis 4 concerns the mediating effect of delinquent peers on the gender-delinquency relationship, stating that the mediating effect will be greatest in patriarchal/traditional and patriarchal/status-reversal families. The findings are somewhat consistent with this hypothesis. Delinquent peers are a significant predictor of delinquency in all household types and they mediate the gender-delinquency relationship completely in the two households in which the gender effect has not already been mediated completely by the other social psychological variables—patriarchal/traditional and egalitarian families (Tables 4 and 7, model 4).

These results suggest that social-psychological discussions of the gender gap in delinquency have advanced far beyond structural-level explanations, focusing on power relations between males and females. Future discussions and assessments of the gender gap in delinquency, therefore, must focus more pointed attention on the structural-level processes influencing parenting, as well as differences in parenting of sons and daughters, given the strong body of literature on social structure and personality that links parental work orientations to their parenting practices. However, neither the family types specified herein, nor the family types in power-control theory, have proven effective for understanding these processes.

### *Discussion*

The goals of this paper were twofold. The first goal was to devise a reformulation of the structural component of power-control theory, wherein relative workplace power

positions of fathers and mothers translate into relative power dynamics within the home, influencing ultimately the gender gap in delinquency among sons and daughters. The second goal was an extension of the social-psychological factors proposed to explain the variation of gender gap in delinquency across family types. The data fail generally to support my structural arguments. My extension of the social-psychological mechanisms, however, receives support from the data.

There are several possible explanations for why the data fail to support my structural arguments and these explanations can inform future examinations of the relationship between gender, power, and delinquency.

As discussed earlier, one route for future research is to focus more on the measurement of parental workplace positions. It may be that measurement schemes using explicitly neo-Marxian categories, as power-control theory suggests, or those using income or occupational status, as the sociology of family literature has emphasized, will prove to be better-suited to my arguments.

A second route for research is to measure explicitly household power. We do not know if the failure of these family types to predict the gender gap in delinquency results from the broken link between power in the workplace to power in the household because I have not assessed power in the household, neither have others who have tested power-control theory. I would propose assessing different measurement schemas with data collected to deal explicitly with these issues.

Another path for future research is to examine adolescent agency in tests of power-control theory. Singer and Levine (1988: 643) have suggested that adolescents may engage in “gender-specific subcultural responses to family class structures,” in which adolescents

resist parental controls and socialization. For example, a respondent was asked “how much is it like your mother to know your whereabouts?” While it may be very much like a respondent’s mother to know his or her whereabouts, without measuring responses to control (e.g. s/he may actively resist what is perceived as suffocating control by staying out all night), the link between family processes and adolescent delinquency is lost. Because youth are not passive receptors, there may be more affecting the gender-delinquency relationship than familial processes and tests of agency can tap into these alternative sources of behavior.

As suggested in the discussion of males’ greater subjection to parental control in egalitarian families, future research may also benefit from including measures of parental agency. Just as husbands and wives exercise agency when they compensate for their gender atypical workplace power dynamics, they may consciously exercise agency in the control and socialization of their adolescent children.

Future research in the power-control tradition would also benefit from the use of units of analysis larger than those used in this test, and most other tests, of the theory’s propositions. This methodological shift, wherein researchers analyze family-level data in addition to individual-level data, is supported by Blackwell and Reed (2003). Specifically, future research that includes data collection on the family-level would be able to assess actual household power to determine if relative workplace power of husbands and wives translates into household power relations in a predicted way, as well as the extent to which relative household power influences the control and socialization of sons and daughters. Thus, use of family-level data will enable researchers to test the propositions of power-control theory in a more direct way. Family-level data will also allow researchers to tap into parental agency.

Power-control theory is a theory of the effects of family processes. Therefore, it would behoove future researchers to analyze family-level data.

It is also necessary to note that the data used in this analysis are nearly two decades old. Although the processes proposed in power-control theory are not proposed to be decade-dependent, newer data are generally more desirable.

Finally, it may be that a new theoretical conceptualization is needed. However, the necessity for new theoretical directions cannot be determined until alternative measurement schemas have been implemented. Such alternatives should include different indicators of workplace power, direct measures of household power, measures of adolescent and parental agency, and, thus, analysis of (recently collected) family-level data.

Although predictions regarding the structural component of the theory did not receive support, the data did provide support for those regarding the extended social-psychological mechanisms. Specifically, the gender gap in delinquency appears to be accounted for partially by differential expressive and instrumental control of sons and daughters. Additionally, the inclusion of delinquent peers in the analysis further mediated the gender effect in all family types but one, in which the relationship had already been mediated completely. Thus, future research on gender, power, and delinquency should include mechanisms other than the familial ones proposed in power-control theory. While the data indicate that family processes are important for understanding the gender gap in delinquency, they also show the impact of delinquent associations.

An issue for power-control researchers in the future is the use of risk-taking measures. Measures of risk-taking are used to tap into an underlying concept of gender ideology. Because daughters are believed to be socialized for passivity required by the “cult

of domesticity,” they are not socialized for risk-taking. Sons, prepared for entrepreneurship, are socialized to prefer risky behaviors. Measuring a respondent’s preference for risk, then, is simply measuring indirectly their acceptance of gender-appropriate preferences. Since power-control theory’s inception, however, researchers have proposed more direct ways of measuring gender ideology (e.g. Heimer 1996). It may benefit power-control researchers in the future to utilize these more direct measures of gender ideology.

In sum, while the social-psychological mechanisms that account for gender variations in delinquency are well understood, the structural roots of the gender gap in delinquency remain a mystery. Before power-control theory is thrown to the wayside, however, new measurement schemas should be implemented to allow for more direct tests of the theory’s propositions. The gender gap in delinquency remains one of the most consistent findings in criminology. Future work in power-control theory, informed by other sociological literatures and approaches to measurement, may identify the source of that persistent gap.

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Table 1: Household Power Dynamics Based on Relative Workplace Power of Spouses

	Mother Has Workplace Power	Mother Lacks Workplace Power or Does Not Work
Father Has Workplace Power	Egalitarian Household	Patriarchal/Traditional Household
Father Lacks Workplace Power or Does Not Work	Patriarchal/Status-Reversal Household	Somewhat Patriarchal/Paternal Compensation Household

Table 2: The Gender Gap in Delinquency Based Upon Relative Power, Control, and Differential Socialization

	Patriarchal/ Traditional (1)	Patriarchal/Status- Reversal (2)	Somewhat Patriarchal/Paternal Compensation (3)	Egalitarian (4)
Power at Work (1)	Father powerful, Mother powerless	Father powerless, Mother powerful	Both powerless	Both powerful
Power at Home (2)	Father powerful, Mother powerless	Father powerful, Mother powerless	Father somewhat more powerful	Equally powerful
Control of kids (3)	Daughters more controlled than sons	Daughters more controlled than sons	Daughters controlled slightly more than sons	Daughters and sons equally controlled
Risk-Taking (4)	Sons develop more taste for risk	Sons develop more taste for risk	Sons develop slightly more taste for risk	Sons and daughters develop equal taste for risk
Delinquent Peers (5)	Sons have more delinquent friends	Sons have more delinquent friends	Sons have slightly more delinquent friends	Sons and daughters have equal number of delinquent friends
Delinquency (6)	Gender gap large	Gender gap large	Gender gap small	No gender gap

**TABLE 3. MEAN COMPARISONS ACROSS FAMILIES BY GENDER**

<b>PATRIARCHAL/STATUS-REVERSAL HOUSEHOLDS</b>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Delinquency	.4373	.2964
Family Attachment	5.7681	6.1620*
Supervision	2.7500	2.7700
Preference for Risk	6.2606	6.3097
Delinquent Peers	10.6486	10.1419
<b>PATRIARCHAL/TRADITIONAL HOUSEHOLDS</b>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Delinquency	.3862	.1667*
Family Attachment	6.2850	6.3326
Supervision	2.8000	2.8700
Preference for Risk	6.2694	6.3216
Delinquent Peers	11.4324	10.1540
<b>SOMEWHAT PATRIARCHAL/PATERNAL COMPENSATION HOUSEHOLDS</b>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Delinquency	.4531	.2340**
Family Attachment	5.6396	6.2063**
Supervision	2.7800	2.7200
Preference for Risk	6.4216	5.8643**
Delinquent Peers	11.3054	9.3620**
<b>EGALITARIAN HOUSEHOLDS</b>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Delinquency	.3805	.2382**
Family Attachment	6.3315	6.2131
Supervision	2.8300	2.7400*
Preference for Risk	6.0950	5.9368
Delinquent Peers	10.6930	9.3597**

\*significant gender difference  $p < .05$  (two-tailed test)

\*\*significant gender difference  $p < .01$  (two-tailed test)

Table 4

Unstandardized Parameters for OLS Regressions Predicting Delinquency for Respondents from Patriarchal/Traditional Households

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.014	.035	.033	.123
Model <i>F</i>	1.547	1.817	1.628	3.226*
Constant	.053 (.303)	-.210 (.598)	-.081 (.618)	-.465 (.599)
Gender (Baseline Female)	.221* (.106)	.230* (.105)	.229* (.105)	.161 (.102)
Age	.014 (.033)	-.000 (.034)	.005 (.034)	-.003 (.033)
Race (Baseline Non-Black)	-.056 (.178)	-.078 (.176)	-.091 (.177)	-.175 (.171)
Family Attachment		-.053 (.046)	-.053 (.046)	-.033 (.044)
Supervision		-.252 (.140)	-.260 (.141)	-.223 (.134)
Preference for Risk			-.030 (.036)	-.037 (.034)
Delinquent Peers				.048* (.014)

Note: N=113. Table entries are unstandardized (metric) regression coefficients (standard errors of estimates are in parentheses). \* indicates  $p < .05$ .

Table 5

Unstandardized Parameters for OLS Regressions Predicting Delinquency for  
Respondents from Patriarchal/Status-Reversal Households

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.003	.033	.047	.126
Model <i>F</i>	1.198	2.241*	2.467*	4.676*
Constant	.331 (.241)	.271 (.418)	-.117 (.465)	-.724 (.469)
Gender (Baseline Female)	.135 (.080)	.114 (.080)	.119 (.079)	.105 (.076)
Age	-.003 (.025)	-.001 (.025)	.001 (.025)	.010 (.142)
Race (Baseline Non-Black)	-.092 (.151)	-.066 (.150)	-.059 (.149)	-.086 (.142)
Family Attachment		-.064 (.034)	-.059 (.034)	-.035 (.033)
Supervision		-.157* (.079)	-.160* (.078)	-.148* (.075)
Preference for Risk			.053* (.029)	.038 (.028)
Delinquent Peers				.050* (.012)

Note: N=180. Table entries are unstandardized (metric) regression coefficients (standard errors of estimates are in parentheses). \* indicates  $p < .05$ .

Table 6

Unstandardized Parameters for OLS Regressions Predicting Delinquency for Respondents  
from Somewhat Patriarchal/Paternal Compensation Households

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.042	.047	.108	.141
Model <i>F</i>	4.291*	3.180*	5.523*	6.212*
Constant	.133 (.231)	.113 (.360)	-.641 (.396)	-.932* (.400)
Gender (Baseline Female)	.214* (.080)	.192* (.081)	.136 (.080)	.067 (.081)
Age	.016 (.024)	.011 (.024)	.021 (.024)	.022 (.023)
Race (Baseline Non-Black)	-.236* (.108)	-.237* (.108)	-.227* (.104)	-.213* (.102)
Family Attachment		-.028 (.025)	-.023 (.024)	-.019 (.023)
Supervision		-.087 (.077)	-.086 (.075)	-.068 (.074)
Preference for Risk			.108* (.027)	.092* (.027)
Delinquent Peers				.043* (.014)

Note: N=224. Table entries are unstandardized (metric) regression coefficients (standard errors of estimates are in parentheses). \* indicates  $p < .05$ .

Table 7

Unstandardized Parameters for OLS Regressions Predicting Delinquency for Respondents from Egalitarian Households

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.025	.049	.102	.167
Model <i>F</i>	4.037*	4.731*	7.851*	11.294*
Constant	.374* (.159)	1.051* (.267)	.351 (.299)	-.051 (.298)
Gender (Baseline Female)	.149* (.054)	.165* (.053)	.148* (.052)	.089 (.051)
Age	-.014 (.017)	-.017 (.017)	-.0808 (.017)	-.013 (.016)
Race (Baseline Non-Black)	-.276* (.137)	-.278* (.139)	-.243 (.135)	-.243 (.130)
Family Attachment		-.064* (.022)	-.052* (.022)	-.044* (.021)
Supervision		.092 (.059)	.090 (.058)	.087 (.056)
Preference for Risk			.090* (.019)	.087* (.018)
Delinquent Peers				.044* (.008)

Note: N=362. Table entries are unstandardized (metric) regression coefficients (standard errors of estimates are in parentheses). \* indicates  $p < .05$ .

Table 8: Z-Test Comparisons of Gender Metric Coefficients in Model 1

	<u>Z-score</u>
Patriarchal/Status-Reversal vs. Patriarchal/Traditional	-.6475
Patriarchal/Status-Reversal vs. Somewhat Patriarchal/Paternal Compensation	-.6982
Patriarchal/Status-Reversal vs. Egalitarian	-.1452
Patriarchal/Traditional vs. Somewhat Patriarchal/Paternal Compensation	.0527
Patriarchal/Traditional vs. Egalitarian	.6056
Somewhat Patriarchal/Paternal Compensation vs. Egalitarian	.6743

\*significant family type difference  $p < .05$  (two-tailed test)

## Appendix A: Descriptive Statistics

### Descriptive Statistics for Entire Sample

Variable	N	%	Mean	S.D.
<b>Gender:</b>				
Male	433	49.3		
Female	445	50.7		
<b>Race:</b>				
Non-Black	802	91.4		
Black	76	8.6		
<b>Age (at wave 1):</b>				
			9.04	1.60
6	30	3.5		
7	163	18.5		
8	161	18.3		
9	159	18.1		
10	155	17.7		
11	177	20.0		
12	33	3.7		
<b>Attachment:</b>				
			6.13	1.34
1 (Low Attachment)	6	.7		
2	5	.6		
3	22	2.5		
4	62	7.0		
5	151	17.2		
6	265	30.2		
7	237	27.0		
8 (High Attachment)	131	14.9		
<b>Supervision:</b>				
			2.78	.48
1 (Low Supervision)	23	2.7		
2	149	16.9		
3 (High Supervision)	706	80.4		
<b>Risk Preference:</b>				
			6.14	1.14
4 (Low Preference for Risk)	87	9.9		
5	238	27.1		
6	244	27.8		
7	160	18.2		
8	89	10.2		
9	42	4.8		
10 (High Preference for Risk)	17	2.0		

**Delinquent Friends:**

0 (Low Delinquent Friends)

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25 (High Delinquent Friends)

0 0

0 0

0 0

0 0

5 .6

47 5.4

44 5.0

100 11.4

83 9.5

87 9.9

103 11.7

110 12.5

93 10.6

7 8.3

4 5.3

31 3.6

32 3.6

10 1.2

9 1.0

2 .2

1 .1

1 .1

0 0

0 0

0 0

1 .1

10.27 3.16

**Delinquency (Logged):**

.000 (Low Delinquency)

.693

1.099

1.386

1.609

1.792

1.946

2.485

2.565

2.708 (High Delinquency)

608 69.3

133 15.2

67 7.7

25 2.9

20 2.3

8 .9

7 .8

3 .3

6 .7

0 .1

.32 .55

### Descriptive Statistics for Respondents from Patriarchal/Traditional Households

Variable	N	%	Mean	S.D.
<b>Gender:</b>				
Male	53	46.6		
Female	60	53.4		
<b>Race:</b>				
Non-Black	102	90.2		
Black	11	9.8		
<b>Age (at wave 1):</b>				
			8.74	1.61
6	9	8.0		
7	17	15.4		
8	32	28.3		
9	14	12.7		
10	18	16.2		
11	20	17.7		
12	2	1.7		
<b>Attachment:</b>				
			6.31	1.17
1 (Low Attachment)	0	0		
2	2	1.5		
3	0	.4		
4	6	5.5		
5	12	10.7		
6	38	33.5		
7	41	36.5		
8 (High Attachment)	13	11.8		
<b>Supervision:</b>				
			2.84	.38
1 (Low Supervision)	0	.2		
2	18	16.1		
3 (High Supervision)	94	83.8		
<b>Risk Preference:</b>				
			6.30	1.49
4 (Low Preference for Risk)	10	9.1		
5	28	24.1		
6	30	26.4		
7	21	19.1		
8	11	9.8		
9	10	8.8		
10 (High Preference for Risk)	2	1.9		

**Delinquent Friends:**

0 (Low Delinquent Friends)

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25 (High Delinquent Friends)

0 0

0 0

0 0

0 0

1 .5

6 5.6

7 6.1

10 8.7

12 10.9

13 11.3

7 6.0

14 12.7

10 9.2

5 4.8

9 7.9

0 .2

11 9.9

2 1.7

3 2.5

0 0

1 .5

1 .6

0 0

0 0

1 .5

10.75 3.76

**Delinquency (Logged):**

.000 (Low Delinquency)

.693

1.099

1.386

1.609

1.792

1.946

2.485

2.565

2.708 (High Delinquency)

87 77.4

10 8.8

7 6.2

1 .8

2 1.6

4 3.6

2 1.5

0 0

0 0

0 0

.27 .56

### Descriptive Statistics for Respondents from Patriarchal/Status-Reversal Households

Variable	N	%	Mean	S.D.
<b>Gender:</b>				
Male	90	50		
Female	90	50		
<b>Race:</b>				
Non-Black	167	92.6		
Black	13	7.4		
<b>Age (at wave 1):</b>				
			9.06	1.57
6	1	.8		
7	41	22.6		
8	30	16.5		
9	31	17.4		
10	30	16.8		
11	43	24.0		
12	3	1.9		
<b>Attachment:</b>				
			5.97	1.15
1 (Low Attachment)	0	0		
2	0	0		
3	3	1.4		
4	18	9.9		
5	37	20.4		
6	65	36.3		
7	41	22.8		
8 (High Attachment)	16	9.1		
<b>Supervision:</b>				
			2.76	.50
1 (Low Supervision)	6	3.3		
2	31	17.3		
3 (High Supervision)	143	79.4		
<b>Risk Preference:</b>				
			6.29	1.35
4 (Low Preference for Risk)	10	5.6		
5	48	26.5		
6	52	29.1		
7	37	20.4		
8	19	10.8		
9	12	6.5		
10 (High Preference for Risk)	2	1.1		

**Delinquent Friends:**

10.39 3.13

0 (Low Delinquent Friends)	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	1	.8
5	6	3.2
6	13	7.4
7	21	11.5
8	14	7.7
9	20	11.3
10	17	9.4
11	19	10.5
12	20	11.0
13	15	8.3
14	15	8.4
15	11	6.1
16	5	3.0
17	1	.8
18	0	0
19	0	.3
20	1	.3
21	0	0
22	0	0
23	0	0
24	0	0
25 (High Delinquent Friends)		

**Delinquency (Logged):**

.37 .53

.000 (Low Delinquency)	113	62.5
.693	36	19.8
1.099	21	11.5
1.386	4	2.2
1.609	3	1.7
1.792	1	.4
1.946	3	1.6
2.485	0	.3
2.565 (High Delinquency)	0	0

**Descriptive Statistics for Respondents from Somewhat Patriarchal/Paternal Compensation Households**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>
<b>Gender:</b>				
Male	112	50		
Female	112	50		
<b>Race:</b>				
Non-Black	187	83.5		
Black	37	16.5		
<b>Age (at wave 1):</b>				
			9.07	1.64
6	9	3.9		
7	43	19.4		
8	36	16.1		
9	36	16.3		
10	45	19.9		
11	44	19.7		
12	10	4.7		
<b>Attachment:</b>				
			5.92	1.67
1 (Low Attachment)	6	2.7		
2	3	1.2		
3	13	5.8		
4	20	9.0		
5	29	13.0		
6	58	26.0		
7	58	25.8		
8 (High Attachment)	37	16.5		
<b>Supervision:</b>				
			2.75	.53
1 (Low Supervision)	10	4.2		
2	38	16.8		
3 (High Supervision)	177	78.9		
<b>Risk Preference:</b>				
			6.14	1.47
4 (Low Preference for Risk)	34	15.3		
5	43	19.3		
6	64	28.4		
7	40	17.8		
8	26	11.8		
9	15	6.7		
10 (High Preference for Risk)	2	.7		

**Delinquent Friends:**

0 (Low Delinquent Friends)

0 0

10.33 2.94

1

0 0

2

0 .2

3

0 0

4

0 0

5

11 5.0

6

10 4.5

7

26 11.6

8

15 6.9

9

13 6.0

10

37 16.7

11

36 15.9

12

27 11.9

13

26 11.8

14

2 1.1

15

6 2.6

16

9 3.9

17

0 .2

18

4 1.9

19

0 0

20

0 0

21

0 0

22

0 0

23

0 0

24

0 0

25 (High Delinquent Friends)

**Delinquency (Logged):**

.000 (Low Delinquency)

158 70.3

.34 .61

.693

29 12.9

1.099

16 7.0

1.386

6 2.8

1.609

9 4.0

1.792

1 .3

1.946

0 0

2.485

0 0

2.565 (High Delinquency)

6 2.7

### Descriptive Statistics for Respondents from Egalitarian Households

Variable	N	%	Mean	S.D.
<b>Gender:</b>				
Male	179	49.5		
Female	183	50.5		
<b>Race:</b>				
Non-Black	347	96.0		
Black	15	4.0		
<b>Age (at wave 1):</b>				
			9.10	1.58
6	11	3.1		
7	61	16.9		
8	63	17.5		
9	77	21.2		
10	62	17.3		
11	70	19.4		
12	17	4.7		
<b>Attachment:</b>				
			6.27	1.21
1 (Low Attachment)	0	0		
2	1	.2		
3	6	1.6		
4	17	4.8		
5	73	20.1		
6	104	28.8		
7	97	26.9		
8 (High Attachment)	64	17.7		
<b>Supervision:</b>				
			2.79	.46
1 (Low Supervision)	8	2.1		
2	62	17.1		
3 (High Supervision)	292	80.8		
<b>Risk Preference:</b>				
			6.02	1.37
4 (Low Preference for Risk)	33	9.0		
5	119	32.9		
6	98	27.2		
7	62	17.1		
8	32	9.0		
9	6	1.5		
10 (High Preference for Risk)	12	3.2		

**Delinquent Friends:**

0 (Low Delinquent Friends)

0 0

10.02 3.09

1

0 0

2

0 0

3

0 0

4

3 .8

5

24 6.7

6

14 3.8

7

44 12.2

8

41 11.5

9

40 11.1

10

41 11.5

11

41 11.4

12

36 9.9

13

26 7.1

14

20 5.6

15

14 4.0

16

6 1.7

17

6 1.8

18

2 .5

19

1 .3

20

0 0

21

1 .1

22

0 0

23

0 0

24

0 0

25 (High Delinquent Friends)

**Delinquency (Logged):**

.000 (Low Delinquency)

251 69.5

.31 .52

.693

59 16.2

1.099

24 6.6

1.386

14 3.9

1.609

6 1.7

1.792

2 .6

1.946

4 1.2

2.485

1 .3

2.565 (High Delinquency)

0 0

## Appendix B: Correlation Matrices by Family Type

### (1) Patriarchal/Traditional Households

	Gender**	Age	Race	Attach.	Super.	Delinq. Friends	Delinq
Gender	1.0	-.091	-.082	-.020	-.088	.170	.196*
Age	-.091	1.0	-.061	-.252*	.073	.088	.023
Race	-.082	-.061	1.0	.020	.071	.119	-.048
Attachment	-.020	-.252*	.020	1.0	.029	-.150	-.109
Supervision	-.088	.073	.071	.029	1.0	.077	.145
Delinquent Friends	.170	.088	.119	-.150	.077	1.0	.346*
Delinquency	.196*	.023	-.048	-.109	.145	.346*	1.0

### (2) Patriarchal/Status-Reversal Households

	Gender**	Age	Race	Attach.	Super.	Delinq. Friends	Delinq
Gender	1.0	-.113	-.098	-.171*	-.012	.081	.134
Age	-.113	1.0	.051	-.078	-.128	-.088	.025
Race	-.098	.051	1.0	.029	-.077	.025	-.059
Attachment	-.171	-.078	.029	1.0	.002	-.189*	-.158*
Supervision	-.012	-.128	-.077	.002	1.0	.042	.149*
Delinquent Friends	.081	-.088	.025	-.189	.042	1.0	.334*
Delinquency	.134	-.025	-.049	-.158*	.149*	.334*	1.0

### (3) Somewhat Patriarchal/Paternal Compensation Households

	Gender**	Age	Race	Attach.	Super.	Delinq. Friends	Delinq
Gender	1.0	-.036	-.041	-.170*	.056	.332*	.180*
Age	-.036	1.0	-.040	-.088	.173	-.035	.042
Race	-.041	-.041	1.0	.048	.047	-.057	-.153*
Attachment	-.170*	-.088	.048	1.0	-.159*	-.129*	-.124
Supervision	.056	.073	.047	-.159*	1.0	.099	.091
Delinquent Friends	.332*	-.035	-.057	-.129*	.099	1.0	.297*
Delinquency	.180*	.042	-.153*	-.124	.091	.291*	1.0

**(4) Egalitarian Households**

	Gender**	Age	Race	Attach.	Super.	Delinq. Friends	Delinq
Gender	1.0	.033	.043	.049	.101*	.216*	.138*
Age	.033	1.0	.083	-.031	-.042	.067	-.047
Race	.043	.083	1.0	.101*	-.195	.007	-.103*
Attachment	.049	-.031	.101*	1.0	.029	-.066	-.154*
Supervision	.101*	-.042	-.195*	.029	1.0	.009	-.047
Delinquent Friends	.216*	.067	.007	-.066	.009	1.0	.296*
Delinquency	.138*	-.047	-.103*	.154*	-.047	.296*	1.0

\* indicates  $p < .05$

\*\* Females coded 0; Males coded 1